



Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice in Michigan
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On behalf of our 400 members, the Michigan Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice (MIRCRC) opposes HB 4109.

The United States was founded on the principle of religious liberty with the separation of religion and state. We celebrate the principle of religious liberty in this country. A cornerstone of our democracy is to ensure one religious view does not trump others.

While our member organizations are religiously and theologically diverse, they are unified in the commitment to preserve reproductive choice as a basic part of religious liberty.

This religious liberty is a cornerstone to our democracy. We are concerned that HB 4109 has adverse religious implications. Rabbi Amy Bigman, one of our board members, writes, “Judaism respects a fetus as a *potential* life, and places a very high priority on protecting it; however, the *existing* life of the mother takes precedence over the fetus. As such, there are circumstances in which a threat to a woman’s life not only permits, but requires, an abortion. [*Ohalot* 7.6] There is no choice in this matter; the mother’s life must be saved. All Jewish authorities agree on this.” Rabbi Bigman and her colleagues fear bills such as SB 160, that restrict medical decision-making of doctors and women, could lead to situations where Jewish women would be forced to violate *halacha* [Jewish law]. This, we believe, is contrary to the religious liberty principle.

Secondly, we believe that, as morally autonomous persons, women are entitled to make medical decisions concerning their health and reproductive lives, according to their faith and conscience as well as on factual, sound, safe and compassionate medical advice.

Politicians should not tie doctors’ hands when they need to determine what is best for a women’s medical situation.

Finally, we believe that the best way to prevent the need for abortions is to prevent unintended pregnancies by improving access to education and health care.